

REMARKS

In the Amendment filed December 9, 2004, the Applicants had amended the claims to set forth the feature of the positioning system being **manually** adjustable.

The Examiner presently rejects the novelty of this feature stating that: "mechanical means that replace an automatic activity are not sufficient to distinguish over the prior art".

To obtain the timely issuance of a patent, and without concurring in the Examiner's rejections in any way, independent claims 1, 16, 26 and 27 have all been further amended to set forth:

- (i) manual **coarse** alignment provided by the **tool head**; and
- (ii) manual **fine** alignment provided by the **component platform**.

Coarse manual alignment of the tool head together with fine manual alignment is particularly advantageous as follows:

First, manual **coarse** alignment of the tool head is provided by an operator simply grabbing onto the tool head and pulling it into a desired position. This avoids the need for any stepper motor positioning systems within the tool head. As a result, the tool head is light and easily moveable. In addition, any vibration of the tool head would cause only minimal problems since the movement of the tool head is only relied upon to provide coarse alignment.

Next, manual **fine** alignment of the component platform is performed by the operator simply reaching down and turning fine positioning knobs 36 and 38. Since the movement of the component platform only provides the fine positional alignment, it is not necessary to move the component platform large distances. (This is particularly advantageous since moving the component platform large distances would result in different levels of exposure to

the pre-heater positioned there below – which in turn results in uneven board temperatures).

Yet another important advantage of the presently claimed system is that the component platform is heavier than the tool head. Therefore, the component platform is less likely to vibrate (making it the portion of the device best suitable for providing the fine alignment).


In view of the present amendments, the Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the present rejections. Thus, all claims are believed to be in condition for allowance. A Notice of Allowance is therefore respectfully requested.

Should the Examiner feel that a telephone conference would advance prosecution of the present application, he is invited to call the undersigned attorney at the number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

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